

# Osteoporosis

Osteoporosis is a medical condition that affects bone strength. Your body is constantly breaking down old bone and building new bone. As you get older, your body breaks down more old bone than is created. This causes your bones to become weak and break more easily.

Osteoporosis itself is not painful. In fact, you may not know you have it until you break a bone. A broken bone can really affect your life. It can cause severe pain and disability. It can make it harder to do daily tasks on your own.

## Care coordination and integration

Geisinger Health Plan offers the following case and health management programs to members:

- Asthma
- Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD)
- Diabetes
- Heart disease
- Heart failure
- Hypertension (high blood pressure)
- Osteoporosis
- Tobacco cessation (quitting)
- Weight management

For more information, call 800-883-6355 or 570-214-8649, Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. TTY/TDD users should call 711.



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## How to protect your bones

Now is the time to put your safety and personal needs first. Making a few lifestyle changes can impact your bone health.

**Diet** – Eating a balanced diet rich in calcium and Vitamin D can help keep your bones strong. Your bones are made of calcium and you absorb calcium through the foods you eat. You also need Vitamin D, which helps you use calcium to make new bone.

**Calcium** – Aim for 1,200 mg a day. One eight ounce glass of milk is about 360 mg. Other calcium sources include:

- Low fat yogurt, cheese and milk products
- Broccoli
- Whole grains
- Calcium fortified cereals and juices

**Vitamin D** – Aim for 600-800

international units (IU) of Vitamin D each day. One eight ounce glass of fortified orange juice is about 150-200 IU of Vitamin D. Other Vitamin D sources include:

- Sunlight, avoid peak times of the day
- Foods fortified with Vitamin D, such as breakfast cereals
- Salmon, tuna and mackerel
- Fortified milk

**Prevent falls** – Falls are the most common reason for breaking a bone. You can prevent falls by:

- Using a cane or walker if needed
- Limiting alcohol
- Getting your eye sight checked
- Keeping your home clutter free



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## Get tested

A bone density test is a painless way to measure bone strength. The test determines your bone density or T-score by comparing your x-ray with that of an average healthy young adult. Your doctor uses this information to predict your risk for a broken bone. The lower your T-score, the greater your fracture risk. Your doctor will decide which treatment is best for you, depending on your T-score, or degree of osteoporosis,

## Medication

Sometimes lifestyle changes alone are not enough and you need to take medicine. Some medicine helps reduce bone loss. Other medicine helps to build new bone. Work with your doctor to decide what is best for you.

## Build muscle to slow bone loss

Exercise programs for osteoporosis can help build muscle strength, prevent falls and slow bone loss. They also help improve posture and balance. Start with light weight bearing exercises. Try walking for 30 minutes each day. Add exercises that improve balance, such as simple yoga poses. Try to avoid movements like jumping, running, bending or twisting. These movements may increase your risk for bone fractures.



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## What is our mission?

Our mission is to help members be as healthy as possible. As a member, you can get expert help to better manage your condition - all at no extra charge. Participation is voluntary and in no way affects the status of your healthcare coverage.

Geisinger Health Plan believes our care coordination program can be beneficial in improving or maintaining your health.

How can I learn more?

To take advantage of this program, call 800-883-6355 or 570-214-8649, speak with your healthcare provider or visit us on the web at [TheHealthPlan.com](http://TheHealthPlan.com).

The program will:

- Help you better understand your condition
- Update you on new information
- Provide assistance from a nurse who is trained to help members with their specialized healthcare needs